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Hopkins - Memorial Address on John Judson Bagley - 1882

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MEMORIAL ADDRESS

ON THE

LIFE AND CHARACTER

—OF—

JOHN JUDSON BAGLEY,

DELIVERED BEFORE THE MICHIGAN STATE PIONEER SOCIETY,
AT THEIR REQUEST, IN REPRESENTATIVE
HALL, LANSING,

—BY—

GEORGE H. HOPKINS,

ON THE

SEVENTH OF JUNE, 1882.

DETROIT, MICH.:
WM. GRAHAM, PRINTER, 52 BATES STREET.
1882.

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LANSING, December 14, 1881.

Hon. GEO. H. HOPKINS,

Detroit, Mich.

DEAR SIR—At a meeting of the Committee of Historians and Executive Committee of the State Pioneer Society, held at the Capitol on the 6th inst., the following resolution was unanimously passed:

"*Resolved*, That the Corresponding Secretary of the State Pioneer Society be, and he is hereby directed to correspond with Hon. GEORGE H. HOPKINS, of Detroit, and request from him a memorial paper for publication in Vol. IV. of Pioneer Collections in reference to the late Gov. JOHN J. BAGLEY."

Gov. Bagley was a member of the Society, and such a paper is very much desired by the committees, and the matter was thoroughly discussed by them as to who would be the best person to prepare such a paper, and all agreed that you were the one.

Hoping a favorable reply from you,

I am, yours very truly,

GEO. H. GREENE,
Corresponding Secretary.

[The following letter was received in reply to one asking when it was expected to publish Vol. IV., referred to.]

KALAMAZOO, December 27, 1881.

Hon. GEO. H. HOPKINS:

DEAR SIR—Mr. Geo. H. Greene, Corresponding Secretary of the State Pioneer Society, has forwarded me your letter of Dec. 21, inst., in reference to memorial paper of the late Governor Bagley. The 4th volume of "Pioneer Collections of Michigan" will not be printed until after the first Wednesday

in June next. At that time will occur the annual meeting of the "State Pioneer Society," at Lansing, and at that meeting it will gratify the officers of the Society and the people there assembled if you will read the memorial paper, which shall refresh our memories as to the noble qualities of head and heart of one now dead, who was in life the friend of all the people of Michigan.

Very respectfully yours,

H. G. WELLS,
Chairman Committee of Historians
Michigan State Pioneer Society.

MEMORIAL ADDRESS

ON THE

LIFE AND CHARACTER

OF

JOHN JUDSON BAGLEY,

BY

GEORGE H. HOPKINS.

A PIONEER SOCIETY is the Present looking at the Past—the Living communing with the Dead. As we advance in age the memories of our Fathers and Mothers grow more and more dear. We delight to recall their deeds and their virtues.

Go visit New England and the Eastern States, any pleasant day in summer or autumn, and you shall see the pilgrim from the West visiting the home of his father You may see him in the lonely church-yard, at the graves of his ancestors, carefully deciphering on the tomb-stones, worn by the hand of time, the inscriptions, rudely carved, it may be, telling the story of those lying beneath—born, died; birth, death—between the two is gathered all there is of history.

What do the records of the Pioneer Society show? They tell of the toil and privation of him who would make for himself a home in the wilderness. Turning from the comforts and luxuries of the old home —a home to him no longer save in the memories of the past — he seeks towards the setting sun a new

home, and becomes a Pioneer, with all that word implies —and in its meaning it covers all the trials, the sufferings, the hopes and triumphs of the discoverer in the new-found land. With all this labor and privation the Pioneer is not an unfortunate man; he is not an unhappy man. I doubt if any class of men or women found more real enjoyment and pleasure than the Pioneers of our early days. The fact that for themselves they chose to forsake the old for the new, made their daily toil a pleasure. None the less do we owe them. They made it possible for us to live in a veritable land of promise. Through their toil came our rest. By their pain comes our pleasure. Through their want comes our plenty.

And the duty we owe to them and ourselves as well, bids us cherish their memories. The Pioneer Society of Michigan, in thus honoring those who but a few short months since were of us, honors equally the living present. The pioneer roll of Michigan contains the names of many heroes—men and women who toiled and rested not—men whose first love and thought was for their family and home, the next state and country. They loved their state like as the mother loves her first-born. Of and among such was John Judson Bagley. Himself a pioneer, he came from a race of pioneers.

John Judson Bagley was born at Medina, Orleans county, New York, July 24, 1832. His father, John Bagley, was born in Durham, Green County, N. Y., Jan. 21, 1800. His grand-father, John Bagley, was born in Candia, New Hampshire, April 21, 1759, and was a descendant from the Bagley family who came from England early in the 17th century.

His father's mother was Olive Judson, a daughter of Capt. Timothy Judson, a soldier of the Revolution, and a descendant of William Judson, who came from Yorkshire, England, in 1634, and lived at Concord, Mass., a few years;

thence he moved to Stratford, Conn., at the first settlement of that town. Rev. Adoniram Judson, the noted foreign missionary, was a descendant of the same family.

His grand-father's mother was Sarah Hooker, a direct descendant in the third generation of Rev. Thos. Hooker, who came from Hartfordshire, England, in 1635, settled in Hartford, Conn., and planted the first church in Connecticut—an eloquent, able and faithful minister.

Very soon after the close of the Revolution his grandfather, Capt. John Bagley, and his brother, Cutting Bagley, left their father's home in New Hampshire with their young wives, making the journey across the country on horseback to Durham, Green County, N. Y., where they bought land on the eastern slope of the Catskill mountains, 18 miles from the Hudson river. The Bagley homestead there was on the bank of a beautiful mountain stream which falls in a fine cascade on the farm.

The brothers built a log cabin and the two families lived together several years, until, as their children grew up, the farm was divided and two homes made. While living on their farm the two young men were visited several times by their father and mother, who made the journey from their home in New Hampshire on horseback. The last visit was made in a buggy, which was the first vehicle of the kind seen in that part of New York. A few years later the father of Gov. Bagley moved to Medina, N. Y., and subsequently lived in Lockport, N. Y. When John was eight years of age his father removed with his family to Michigan, stopping a few months at Mottville, St. Joseph county, and then settled at Constantine, in that county. His father was a tanner in New York, and continued in the same business in Michigan. The family were in moderate circumstances, and John began his business career in a country store in St. Joseph county. A short time after we find him an inmate in the home of

their old family physician, while living in Lockport, N. Y., Dr. J. B. Barnes, then living in Owosso. For some months he remained in Dr. Barnes' family and attended school with his children. Shortly after the Bagley family followed John to Owosso, the father entering business with Mr. Rufus Colter, and John being engaged as clerk in the store of Dewey & Goodhue.

When about sixteen years of age he decided to leave Owosso and seek for himself a business engagement in Detroit. Friends and acquaintances he had none there, but what mattered that to him? Employment was the one thing he then sought, confident that all else desirable would soon follow. Who was to be his employer, or what his employment, were matters of secondary moment. The main thing was an *opportunity* to *work*. He had a strong hand, a willing heart, and a love for toil—capital, without which few succeed, with which few fail. He had not long to wait. Arising in the morning from his humble lodging, he went at once to the foot of Woodward avenue for a view of the river and spent some time there admiring the beauty of the stream, to him almost a lake in extent. As he watched the evidences of thrift, trade and successful business there and in the city behind him, he said to himself, "This is the place for me; I'll find something to do here." Turning on his heel, before he had reached Jefferson avenue, two streets away, he found what he sought—labor. Stopping in front of the store of Isaac S. Miller, looking at the display by the open door, the proprietor accosted him with, "Young man, what do you want?" He replied, "I want work." Mr. Miller invited him into the store, and before leaving it he had engaged for a year, and did not leave the employment of Mr. Miller till, five years after, at the age of twenty-one he entered upon business for himself.

His mother was a most remarkable woman. The

proper training of her children for lives of usefulness was her constant study and care. She religiously believed that every deliberate act of the child entered into the character of the man. To her it was a sin for the mother to neglect or refuse to correct the child when a wrong, however slight, had been committed. I cannot better show the character of the son than to give you the characteristics of the mother, and some illustrations of the training the boy received. She was not impetuous, but whatever she decided to do, that she did with her might, and put her whole heart into the work, yet there was no appearance of haste. She put great stress upon the bringing up of her boys. She never failed of an opportunity to call their attention to the effect that would follow every act in their lives. They must black their boots every morning, have their collar clean and neat, because every town must have some first-class children in it, and all fine children give evidence of care. "To black your boots, John, will show you are to be counted among the best," said his mother.

When he began work as a traveling salesman for his employer, Mr. Miller, a tobacconist, his mother insisted that he take letters from a friend of the family, a clergyman and leading citizen, to the leading men in the towns where he had to stop. He laughed at the idea—going to ministers, deacons and teachers when traveling for a tobacco house. She claimed it was the way a man worked, and the people he associated with that marked and showed character, not the thing worked for.

About this time in his hours at home "*Uncle Tom's Cabin*" was read aloud by some member of the family. His mother, as the book was read, was thinking of the effect of the book on the Nation—on the present civilization. His father would take down the Bible—get at the history of slavery—talk of the cotton crop. Who was go-

ing to raise the cotton? He thought we "better not get too much stirred up." She thought we better not talk, but organize a Free Soil party without delay, and know for certain the sentiments of every man in Michigan. She wanted facts, statistics, and *then move.* He thought it would "all come out right at last." Then Mrs. Bagley would straighten up, put down her sewing and answer, "Not unless we shape it." In this way John was taught from infancy that he was one of the active forces in shaping the society and polity of Michigan.

At one time John had been visiting friends in Cleveland, and soon after his mother said to a mutual friend who had met him there: "The Western Reserve was settled by the best people from New York and New England; the society is fine, Cleveland is their metropolis, but didn't John look equal and superior in manly qualities to them all?" "I did so want a boy of mine to inherit the best blood back of us." She believed him the brightest, strongest minded boy in Michigan. She was the first who had faith in him.

When quite a lad his mother had given him directions as to some marketing for the table, and he was to send up the articles at once. He was busy, or thought a little delay would be of no account, so waited till he came for dinner and brought them himself. Soon as he met his mother he saw that he had made a mistake, and as a penalty offered to pay for the articles from his little pocket store. She rose from her seat, stood tall and commanding, and replied, "John, it is not money I care for; it is the formation of your character, that is forming every day by every act; you would not treat your employer with such disrespect for his wishes; you shall not your mother. Your mother is grieved that a son of hers could be so negligent of others' plans and wishes. I wish you to correct all such habits. I do not want you to weave any such traits into

your character." At another time when John had been giving an account of some adventure she thought he put in several things that detracted from the story, and explaining it to him, said: "You must not open your mouth and let everything run off your tongue as it pleases. Choose what you will say—do what you will do Do as much as you will do, no more—never drift. A human being must direct his tongue, as well as his feet, to be a power."

At one time his mother was correcting him for some little fault. He turned as he went out the door and said, "But, mother, I only do it once in a while." She followed him out and said, "Come back," and in the walk beside the house talked to him gently, but severely, on holding such a sentiment, as if "doing a wrong once in a while was not a sin." "Would I trust a servant who stole only once in a while?" She left him; he stood leaning against the side of the house, thinking for a time; then turning to a young friend who had witnessed the interview, said: "If I could be such a man as mother wants me to be, what a splendid man I would be." "She is a Roman Cornelia; it is not an easy thing to be a son of such a woman." So he went whistling out of the yard.

"This superior woman was a thoroughly educated girl," writes a friend. "She not only owned the volumes of the English classics, but had them when a girl, and was familiar with them early in life. She was born and bred in an educated family. In the wilds of Michigan it seemed useless culture. She did not live to see it shape her children's lives." But the seeds had been sown, and the life of Gov. Bagley shows how deeply they took root. The same writer continues: "She liked centralization and order. In oft-repeated visits to their house, and their visits to my father's, I heard discussions which taught me much of history and the relations of Church and State, the ideas a

people held gradually shaping its institutions. She laid great stress upon the importance of individual opinion and belief, however humble the person. She almost invariably silenced her opponent. She carried heavy guns, loaded with learning and authority. * * * The great loving heart of John Bagley, and yet his respect for institutions to properly direct human action, was the result of his home training and his parents' character. When but a boy, but doing the work of a man, he took time to read aloud to his parents from standard books on subjects of vital importance to society. His mother's wishes during restless boyhood was his law, and this was his salvation amid great temptations. He could not be *only* a business man—the habits of his youth directed him. Politics was not simply getting offices, but a politician was one to give form to our civilization. When a boy he was greatly interested in the history of governmental affairs of the Anglo-Saxon races, and the growth of the power in people to form institutions fitted to aid them to enlightened civilization. So his religion was a rebinding of individuals and organizations to that which was true, good and helpful. No creed that did not recognize that Humanity was divine, in the image of the Creator, could command his respect. He believed in the inspiration of to-day, and so honestly was compelled to leave the church he was baptized in, for that was an institution resting on ancient inspiration. He could not repeat, 'there is no good in us,' but 'all poor miserable creatures,' when his mind and heart disbelieved it."

Born and reared as an Episcopalian—but at the same time taught to have for himself convictions and to follow them—in the full strength of his manhood his religion was too broad to be bound and fettered by any creed. Thinking it better for every one to have a church home he connected himself with the Unitarian, as more nearly ex-

pressing his ideas of what a church should be, though his interest was not confined to that denomination. Wherever good men and women met and worshiped the living God there was his church. Such he was ever ready and willing to join in every good word and work.

He had a deep and abiding faith in the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of men. To him the Father's infinite care was ever present everywhere.

The following lines of the poet he so much loved he used to often repeat:

"And so beside the silent sea
I wait the muffled oar;
No harm from Him can come to me
On ocean or on shore.
I know not where His islands lift
Their fronded palms in air.
I only know I cannot drift
Beyond His love and care."

We will let his own words tell of his convictions and belief. The following extracts from his letters written when a young man give a correct insight into his character, and show a mind full of noble aims and correct views of the highest duty of mankind, and that the boy in the village school or the country store, the young man behind the desk or as a traveling salesman had found time to gather pearls when others were content with moss. To him the book of nature was ever open and he read the pages eagerly and intelligently:

"Jan. 16th, 1853, Sunday.

* * * It is a beautiful morning. The sun is shining on the frosty grass, and as the frost gradually disappears, and trickles down in drops of water, it teaches me that we too, should follow the example of the sun, and shed the genial influence of a kind word and a smile, to make glad the heart of the unfortunate and sorrowful. A cheerful

face, and a word kindly spoken, has melted the cold and cheerless frost from many a heart frozen by the chilling winds of sorrow. I have often thought how much better was a kind and sympathizing heart than the wealth of the world. It will secure friends that money will not buy or borrow. When I am dead and gone, I would rather that one should stand over my grave and say, 'Here lies one who, when others crushed, gave me a helping hand, one who I can never forget for his friendship,' than all the marble monuments that wealth could rear—emblazoned with my virtues. * * *

Detroit has seemed as if it would always bemy home. * * * Here I want to live and die."

"Jan. 22d, 1853, Sunday Eve.

"I have been reading lately the life and letters of Hannah Moore. * * * Have also been reading one of Mr. Colton's works, "Deck and Port." He is one of my favorites. * * * I expect to settle down and attend to business at home. I wish that business to be sufficiently lucrative to live well. I want a happy home. I want a happy and contented heart. I want friends in shade as well as sunshine—friends all the time. Here my wants cease; my ambition is not great. If Cæsar's ambition had been no greater he would never have felt the dagger of Brutus."

"Feb. 13, 1853.

"There are times in every one's life, I believe, be they Jew or Gentile, when they feel better than at others, and feel more religious, if I may use the word. * * * The same sort of feeling I used to have when quite little, when I would ask mother to pray for Fred and me before going to sleep. Those prayers come back to me now, and like the streamlet from the spring, seem to have gathered strength daily until it has become a mighty river. * * *

Mother said to me this morning, 'John, do you never deceive your wife in regard to your business.' * * * I began life young, and have done well so far. My ambition has been to be a good man, a kind man, a good business man, and a successful man. That I shall succeed, I dare not doubt. Still, I do not feel '*lifted up*' with my success, but feel to thank God, who has thus far led me, and my parents, who, when young, instilled good principles in me, and who, as I have grown older, gave their advice, their counsel, their example and their good wishes. That none of these may ever desert me is my earnest hope; that as long as I continue to 'act well my part' they will continue with me I do not doubt."

"BELVIDERE, Ill., March 7, 1853.

* * * "I have been traveling over the broad prairies of Illinois for the past two days, seeing sights that I never before witnessed in Michigan or elsewhere. My ideas of prairies had been formed from the small ones I had seen in Michigan. But the prairies of Illinois seem boundless; from Chicago to Rockford—a distance of ninety miles—it is all one vast prairie, with only an occasional grove of trees to be seen. * * * Still, give me my own home—the home almost of my whole life, so far, and I hope my home always. The forests of Michigan are to me a grander sight than these plains, and the thundering of the wind among the trees of my own state is sweeter music to my ears than the gentle, love-like melody that sweeps through the tall grass of the prairie."

" July 1853.

" * * * to one whose life has been profitably spent, there can be no greater happiness in old age than to look back upon the past, and trace each year as it has flown by, each marked with some good deed or action.

I sometimes think I am too sentimental, (as it is called)

and that I think too much of those things, and too little of my business and the daily duties of life. I hope it is not so."

" July 24th, 1853.

" To-day is my birthday—only twenty-one, and it seems as if I were twenty-five. The head is more than twenty-one, but the heart is younger, and I hope always will be.

Being in business at so early an age, and being forced to assume responsibilities far beyond my age, make me feel and appear older than I am. * * *

To many twenty-one is the happiest year of their life. They consider that they are men, not boys, and in many, too many instances, that they are no longer bound to parents or family, but are rid of all legal and moral obligations to them. With me it is different. I have felt and acted as a man for many years, and have and shall always feel toward my parents, that I am bound to them by every tie that always had existed. God grant that nothing may ever change my feelings toward them. * * * *

I have been thinking to-day how much I owed to the best of mothers. All that I am and all that I expect to be that is good came from her. Still how little have I done to repay her. True—I have loved her, but not half enough. She has often told Fred and me that having two such good boys repaid her for all that she had ever done for us, but how much better boys we could be if we had our lives to live again."

One Sunday afternoon in July, 1863, he writes "if man had made this world and framed its laws, I wonder if we would have had a Sabbath. Selfishness, love of money, and accumulation of wealth, would have deprived us of such a day. Did it ever seem to you that the sun shone pleasanter, and the air seemed more pure Sunday morning than on other days? * * * Direct your next letter to Detroit. The first of August I go into business. The

goal for which I started six years ago has been reached. Shall I be any happier? I think not, for it is not business or money that makes happiness. Money does not buy it, or position command it. It is only to be found in the quieter path of everyday life, in the duties of each hour and in our own heart. I shall be more content, and perhaps indirectly it will make me happier. Not that it will change my heart, but it may place within my power the means of doing good to myself, my family and my neighbors. If I am ever to be the possessor of wealth my earnest prayer is, that it may not harden my heart or sear my conscience, but that they may be left young and fresh, as I sincerely believe they are now—alive to the necessities of others, and the faults of my own nature."

"Sabbath Afternoon, April 2, 1854.

* * * "My heart shall alway be young, and I am sure yours can never grow old. The body may grow old, the step be feeble, the sight grow dim, and the hand forget its cunning; but 'the heart! the heart is a heritage, that keeps the old man young.' I have sometimes thought, since my residence in the city, and since business with its cares and anxieties has seized hold of me, that I did not love nature as I used to do—that I was growing more fond of money, and less fond of the beautiful in this beautiful world—that some of the well-springs of human kindness in my heart were being sealed up—that the milk of human kindness was growing sour. Still, in reality I do not think so, and I earnestly pray that it may never be so.

* * * I realize that I am no longer a boy playing amid the flowers of the forest, or dabbling in the waters of the St. Joe, *gathering knowledge from Webster's spelling book, or gathering nuts from the tall hickory trees that surrounded our home.* I know that hereafter life will be a constant toil intermingled with much pleasure; I know that I am

afloat on life's troubled waters and must seize the oar, and row my own bark. Still I fondly trust that there is somewhere on the banks of life's stream a harbor and a haven of rest, where I can safely anchor, lay down my oar, and be happy in the knowledge, that I have done my duty. I know that 'Life is real, life is earnest,' and that we are not sent here to dream but to work."

"April 9, 1854.

* * * "To-day I have been dreaming of the past-old remembrances, old times, old scenes. boyish plays and boyish hardships, boyish loves and boyish hates. I do love to look back and think of the good times. The spelling schools and the walk home—the Saturday afternoons, devoted to play, the master's ruler and the fires we used to kindle with it, the snow balling and ball playing, the prizes for being at the head, and the shame for being at the tail of the class. Then the unpretending church, without steeple or bell, without cushions or carpets, yet still I love it more than any of our palaces. How oft have I sat and listened to 'Old Hundred' or 'Corinth,' sang, I thought then, as no one but our choir could sing it. The old fashioned tuning fork, and the voice of the leader. I can almost hear it now. Well! well! the church and the school house are gone—and full one-half of their occupants are gone too. Perhaps they are singing 'Corinth' to-day around the throne." * * *

"November, 1854.

* * * "Have you ever read or seen Miss Strickland's 'Lives of the Queens of England?' I saw a copy of them (eight volumes) in one of our book stores a few weeks ago, and for a week past have felt of my purse-strings every day to see if I could buy them. I want them very much, as I have read part of them in spare moments I could catch. They are certainly the most delightful books

I have seen lately. The only time I feel my poverty, or really think I am poor, is in a book-store or picture-gallery. I think, and think, look at this and that book or picture, feel of my purse, button up my coat, stare old poverty in the face and walk off, dreaming of the 'good time' that they say 'is coming.' * * *

If we can bring smiles in place of tears, or joy in place of sorrow, to one erring or unfortunate heart, will it not be fulfilling more than our mission here?

> 'A poor man's tear dropped o'er the grave
> Blots out many a sin, recorded in the book of life.'"

To a young friend leaving college he writes:

"DETROIT, May 1, 1857.

"MY DEAR B—— * * * Now that you are about launching your bark upon the stormy ocean of life, be sure before you do so that all is right. Have every seam and crack well secured. Let the masts be well set and the sails well sprung. Take truth for your compass and honesty for your rudder; let it be well ballasted, and with a clear conscience for a cable and virtue for your anchor, I doubt not that you will ride every storm in safety, and be safely landed in the Haven above when you come to your journey's end."

In November, 1856, soon after the election of Buchanan, he wrote to a young friend who had been stumping the State of New York in oehalf of the Democratic ticket:

"Although with Fillmore's aid you have elected your candidate, still you are beaten. Kansas a slave state beats you in the North, and Kansas a free state beats you at the South. For the Republican party there is a great and glorious future. The great principle of the non-extension of slavery must prevail. The first skirmish has almost defeated you, and although forced to retire from the field,

we have succeeded in forcing your outposts and have slain your first generals and disabled your best troops.

"Thank God, Gen. Cass is a defunct institution. His own home repudiates him by 20,000 paper bullets. Pierce, too, is forsaken by his own state. Everywhere, where schools and newspapers have found their way, you are beaten.

"'Education is the bane of Democracy,' said a Democratic member of Congress from this state, and for once he told the truth."

The young man of 24 spoke the words of prophecy. Though engrossed by the cares of a business which he but a short time before had undertaken for himself, he found leisure to read the signs of the time, and with a keen study of cause and effect he saw the impending conflict, and was preparing himself and neighbors for it. In August, 1861, he writes a friend (a democrat) in Iowa:

"DEAR P——I was glad to see you would not take the treasonable and seditious stand attempted to be foisted on the Democracy of Iowa by the state convention. All honor to you. I hope you may always exert every power to uphold the government and its administrators. I think we shall have no party but the party of the Union. I have forgotten all the party I ever had." * * *

His strong innate love of right and justice made him from the first sound of warlike preparation, a staunch supporter of Lincoln and his administration, though at the Chicago Convention, when Lincoln was nominated, he was there as a devoted adherent of Mr. Seward, felt his defeat keenly, and was fearful that the party had made a mistake.

During the sad days of the war he seemed to live a double life. All the time and energy that any man should give to business he gave to his, and yet he seemed to devote all his time to his party, his State and his country.

A leader in all measures for the advancement of the cause he held so dear, he was frequently at Washington and with the armies in the field—giving aid, comfort and council where most needed. To him every wounded Michigan man was a friend and brother, and he never was so happy as when administering to their wants. His letters to friends show that he then clearly saw what time soon developed. One extract must suffice:

DETROIT, Sept. 29th, 1862.

"Dear S—I returned yesterday from a four weeks trip with the army; followed you from post to post, from spot to spot, without catching you. * * * I arrived on the battlefield of Antietam Wednesday noon, but was engaged all of the evening and Thursday, caring for our wounded soldiers. Friday I started early to find you, but after getting near where I supposed you were, heard you were on the march for the river. As I had to return my ambulance Friday night, I turned back reluctantly. I heard however you were not hurt in any way, or I should not have turned my face homewards.

I have come home utterly disgusted with McClellan, doubting his capacity or his loyalty. He should have annihilated the rebel army on Thursday; why he did not, the coming pen of history alone will tell.

My theory is, that the training of West Point, that has always looked upon the North as common, and the South as the aristocracy, still thinks the same. They do not mean to be utterly defeated, if they are compelled to go into an engagement, but they do not mean to defeat the enemy beyond their power to recuperate, and thus keep the thing along, until the power and energies of both sides are destroyed, and then patch up a dishonorable peace. I may be wrong. I may not be a judge, but I am thoroughly convinced that Thursday ought to have seen the surrender of

the rebel army. They should never have been permitted to take a wagon or gun across the river, nor get across themselves, except as stragglers. I fear we are gone. God alone can save us, and I hope those who have the complete and perfect faith I have not, may by their prayers secure his aid.

The worst is too, that our people are discouraged. This is the worst of all, but it is too true." * *

The family friend from whom we have quoted says: "When he was sixteen years old, visiting at my father's house in Jackson, Mich., he had listened to a theological debate on punishment. He was then the size of a common man. He went out into the yard agitated, distressed —but soon turned to his mother, saying, 'I am going over to the State Prison this afternoon to study punishment as we administer it.' He asked me to go with him and I went. He blocked out what he thought ought to be the duty of the State to criminals and unfortunates. He had loudly and utterly repudiated the Divine's (?) notions that day, that God collected evil together and permitted a Devil to drag them down lower. On the little bridge over the river near the prison, he stopped and stamped down his foot vehemently, 'no man,' he said 'can grow better with only stone walls piled up, by man's ingenuity, about him. Let a criminal see a sprig of grass grow daily,' ('Picciola,' the French story was not then written) 'or some ants build their nests; let him watch how their instinct subverts the lesser good to the greater, that they may exist and resist enemies; let him see anything *natural growing*, and he will see how God governs in Michigan, how God always works good out of evil. 'The wrath of man shall serve God and the remainder will he restrain. He will not gather it and increase it.' He was thoroughly awakened and in earnest. He always thought the wrath of that minister that day awoke him, though but a boy,

and switched him on to a human track. His elders thought it was only the overflow of a big kind hearted boy, but those who saw and heard him that afternoon understood why he wanted to be Governor of the State. He desired to work with the best wisdom he could comprehend. It was his mission to make real his ideal. He did not care to 'plow and plow but never sow.' After he had knowledge he wanted a legitimate sphere to 'act out what he knew.'

Such men do not come by accident. It took many generations of earnest, industrious, virtuous people before such a man could be born. Then an educated mother, with faith in the divinity of her child, with suitable training, was the means in God's hand to bring it about.

Last Christmas he sent a boy a present of Hittell's 'History of Culture,' and wrote in it, very characteristically the Persian verse,

> 'Who learns and learns and acts not what he knows,
> Is one who plows and plows but never sows.'

Those who were intimate with John Bagley, remember how he always had an appropriate quotation at hand—usually a few lines of poetry putting much sense in small space. This was a habit his mother strove patiently to form in his early youth. She would ask, 'My son, what permanent acquisition to your memory have you made to-day?' Jokingly at his tea table in late years, in memory of his stately mother's question, he would draw from his vest pocket some fine sentence from a speech or lines from a poem cut out of a newspaper during the day, and say, 'Here is my permanent acquisition to my memory to-day.'

The mother had long been silent but the habit continued to enrich. If that mother had asked her son how much money he had made he might have been only a business man, but he would not have had that well informed mind, and his friends would not through his life

found him a mine of information, refined wit, or been served with the best sayings of the wisest minds. Persons with him were impressed with the largeness of heart and mind, but forgot his wealth or his power. His mother died before he was called to any place of trust, but she had a faith that 'the State will be the better for the lives of my sons.'

Her faith was to John an inspiration to press on and gain all his mother would want him to be."

Years later he wrote:

"DETROIT, Jan. 8, 1880.

"DEAR M—— * * * I don't agree with you about Jesus. That is to say, I see no reason why I shouldn't celebrate Washington's birthday, because I think Lincoln was a greater man. I don't take any stock in the miraculous Jesus or the atoning Jesus, or the son Jesus. I think the idea connected with him of human brotherhood, good will to men, worth celebrating. The manger business suits me. It shows the worth of poverty to common folks —of plain people. Whether it be myth or fable, or real history, I care not. The thought that the poor are necessary, that the reforms of the world come from the bottom, is the grand idea connected with Jesus. If Abraham Lincoln had been rich, or a graduate of Yale, or a philosopher, he would never have been the martyr. Rail splitters make martyrs and heroes and saints. The others have their spheres and are necessary, but these are God-born.

Your brother,

JOHN J. BAGLEY."

The training of the mother and the spirit of the boy are shown in a school oration delivered at White Pigeon when about twelve years old. The subject chosen was "The importance of improving the season of youth." I give a single sentence: "Now is the time when, in the

spring of life, when health sparkles in your eyes, when your blood flows purely in your veins, and when the spirits are gay as the morning, to mould your future actions, habits and dispositions. On the manner in which you spend your early days depends your future destiny."

His school days were few, and ended when he was fourteen; during a portion of the time between eight and fourteen he had attended school at Constantine, White Pigeon and Owosso; but to have known his mother was a liberal education; and from her home teachings he graduated with the highest honors.

Little can be said of the public career of Gov. Bagley that is not already well known to the people of Michigan. His love for good government and a hearty interest in all that pertained to it was a part of his nature. He could no more remain a passive citizen, than the blade of grass could cease to grow under the genial influence of sun and rain. From early boyhood he took a deep interest in the political discussions of the day. But he was not content to follow where others led. He weighed carefully the opinions of others—formed his own convictions and followed them. He believed it to be the duty of every person to have an opinion on every subject upon which he should be called to decide, and insisted that every man who had a ballot should cast it. Nothing so displeased him as to find at the close of election day that some friend or neighbor had neglected to vote. He believed that the safety and perpetuity of our institutions depended upon the intelligence of the common people, and he would have every individual act as though he himself was a part of the government. Long before he had attained his majority he was a pronounced whig, although his father was a democrat, and was a republican from the organization of that party.

Soon after he cast his first vote he was elected a mem-

ber of the board of education from the third ward of the city of Detroit. Then his friends proposed that he canvass the ward as a candidate for alderman. The opposition was largely in the majority and nominated their strongest man, the late Gen. A. S. Williams. He believed in success, and said to his party friends that whoever was the candidate, that man must be the unanimous choice of the party—if there was no opposition to his nomination he would make the run and be elected. They took him at his word, and the result was a surprise to his friends and a disappointment to his opponents. He often spoke with pride of this first victory.

As a member of the council he recognized the necessity of a more thorough and efficient police system for the city. For him to see was to act, and he rested not till the plan which he drafted was a law and the present metropolitan police system organized. He was one of the original commissioners and remained on the board until nominated by the Republicans for Governor in 1872. When the news of his death reached Detroit the board of police commissioners placed a fitting testimonial on their records in which they say, "To him is mainly due the credit of the inception and organization of the metropolitan police department, and to him it is largely indebted for whatever of usefulness and efficiency it has since attained. He brought to this work the same qualities of mind and heart which have since made him prominent in the State, and in the councils of the principal reformatory, charitable and educational institutions; and in the various opportunities occurring to him in public and private life, he was always the faithful friend and trusted adviser of the department."

His love for his party and his great executive ability made his services in great demand by his party associates, and long before his name was mentioned in connection with any State office he was the recognized leader of his

party in the State. Elected Governor of the State in 1872 and re-elected in 1874, his four years Governorship seem to you but as yesterday. Into that office he carried the same intelligent force that had made his many business ventures a success. For him to be Governor of the State was not simply to occupy a position of honor and trust for an allotted four years and then give way to another. To him it meant incessant, well directed labor. And he left such an example that hereafter to be Governor of Michigan is no easy task. There is not a State institution that did not receive from him an awakening.

He recognized the tendency of institutional life to be of itself retrograding, and hence the necessity of constant watchfulness on the part of the State. The State must care for its institutions or soon the institutions would cease to care for the State.

As Governor, he felt that he represented the State—not in a narrow, nor egotistical way, but in the same sense that a faithful trusted confidential agent represents his employer, and that as the Executive of the State he was her "attorney in fact." And his intelligent thoughtful care will long continue the pride of the people he so much loved.

He was ambitious. Ambitious for place and power, as every noble mind is ambitious, because these give opportunity. However strong the mind and powerful the will, if there be no ambition, life is a failure. He was not blind to the fact that the more we have the more is required of us. He accepted it in its fullest meaning He had great hopes for his State and his country. He had his ideas of what they should be. With a heart as broad as humanity itself, with an intelligent, able and cultured brain, the will and the power to do; he asked his fellow-citizens to give him the opportunity to labor for them. Self entered not into the calculation. His

whole life was a battle for others; and he entered the conflict eagerly and hopefully.

His noble, generous nature made his innumerable benefactions a source of continuous pleasure. Literally, to him it was "more blessed to give than to receive."

His greatest enjoyment was in witnessing the comfort and happiness of others. Not a tithe of his charities were known to his most intimate friends, or even to his family. Many a needy one has been the recipient of aid at an opportune moment, who never knew the hand that gave.

At one time a friend had witnessed his ready response to some charitable request, and said to him: "Governor, you give away a large sum of money; about how much do your charities amount to in the course of a year?" He turned at once and said: "I do not know, sir; I do not allow myself to know. I hope I gave more this year than I did last, and hope I shall give more next year than I have this." This expressed his idea of charity, that the giving should at all times be free and spontaneous.

Anything like a stated amount at stated intervals, or at stated times, was making charity a mere matter of business—a cool calculation of dollars and cents. Literally, his left hand did not know what his right hand was doing.

His state papers were models of compact, business-like statements, bold, original, and brimful of practical suggestions, and his administration will long be considered as among the ablest in this or any other State.

He had, probably, a larger circle of personal acquaintances throughout the State than any other man. He believed in the people, and the people loved and believed in him. He was proud of his Pilgrim parentage, and for many years took especial delight in his visits to New England, and they were so many and frequent that to certain portions of Massachusetts and New Hampshire his

massive form and kindly face were almost as familiar as to the people of his own State. He visited Plymouth Rock with a feeling akin to that with which the devotee visits Rome.

During his leisure hours from early life, and especially during the last few years, he devoted much time to becoming acquainted with the best authors. Biography was his delight; the last he read was the "Life and Work of John Adams," in ten volumes.

In all questions of business or public affairs he seemed to have the power of getting at the kernel of the nut in the least possible time. In reading he would spend scarcely more time with a volume than most persons would devote to a chapter. After what seemed a cursory glance, he would have all of value the book contained. Rarely do we see a business man so familiar with the best English authors. He was a generous and intelligent patron of the arts, and his elegant home was a study and pleasure to his many friends, who always found there a hearty welcome. At Christmas time he would spend days doing the work of Santa Claus. Every Christmas eve he gathered his children about him, and taking the youngest on his lap, told some Christmas story, closing the entertainment with "The Night Before Christmas," or Dickens' "Christmas Carol."

His health had always been of the robust, vigorous kind, and ten years ago he seemed to have force and energy enough to last a century. But ceaseless labor and toil will surely tell on the strongest constitution, and the man who had not known a sick day found that he was no exception.

In the winter of 1876–77 he felt the first indications that his strength was giving way, and at no time afterwards was he a well man. His strong constitution and

vigorous will made a gallant fight, but each year saw his health gradually failing.

In September, 1880, he had a slight stroke of paralysis, and from this never fully recovered. Early in the spring of 1881 he decided to try the climate of the Pacific Slope in the vain hope that change of air and scenery would be to him as the healing waters.

But disease had fastened her fatal coils about him. None knew it better than he, and in speaking of his condition at this time he said, "I have not lived long; but I have lived a great deal too much. I was managing an extensive business before I was much more than a boy. Indeed, I had no boyhood, I skipped it; I sprang from childhood into the cares and work of middle age, and have never taken a holiday. I had done the work of a long life before I was thirty, and now I find myself spent before I am fifty, although I started with a capital of vitality that should have lasted me till eighty."

The journey to San Francisco he enjoyed as much as his remaining energies would permit, but as he approached the "golden gate" his strength seemed almost gone .A few days' rest and he was almost himself again, but as the days lengthened his strength diminished. His relish for enjoyment which the bracing air, new scenes and new faces brought him was keen, but the strength would each day soon give out. The long drives became shorter —hours of enjoyment grew less. The once strong frame which had before asked for toil now demanded—rest, rest. But there, as everywhere, his nature remained the same—and strangers became friends—the acquaintance of a few weeks almost like the friends of a life-time. When too weak to leave his room congenial friends would call, and many a pleasant hour be passed, profitable alike to each. He realized his condition perfectly, but there was so little of the invalid in his nature that to his friends he seemed

like a man with a wounded arm, who for a few days was compelled to remain indoors, and his cheerfulness never deserted him.

The great change which he saw nearing each day brought to him no fears and few regrets. It would have pleased him to remain with his friends a few years longer, but principally because he feared they would miss his aid and counsel. As the end came he said, thinking no doubt of the kind admonitions of the loving mother he was so soon to meet, "I think the world is a little better for my having lived in it; I have not done as much good as I ought to have done, nor as much good as I might have done; I would like to live a little longer and do a little more." But his work was ended. Ended? No! Just begun.

"The good men do lives after them."

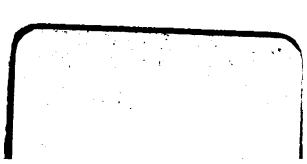
In the sweet memory of the strong man, the widowed mother, the orphan child, he is yet alive. He is remembered as he would wish to be.

The beautiful lines, sung at his request, as his cherished friends pay their last tribute, tell us how to cherish the recollections of a life full of noble deeds:

"Fading away like the stars of the morning,
Losing their light in the glorious sun;
So let me pass away, gently and lovingly,
Only remembered by what I have done.

"So in the harvest, if others may gather
Sheaves from the fields that in spring I have sown,
Who plowed or sowed matters not to the reaper,
I'm only remembered by what I have done.

"Fading away like the stars of the morning,
So let my name be, unhonored, unknown;
Here or up yonder I must be remembered,
Only remembered by what I have done."



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